

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**May 7, 1981**

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. HAM:** — Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me, on behalf of the member for Nipawin to introduce 21 grade 7 students from the Red Earth-Shoal Lake Joint High School. They are accompanied by Mrs. Samuel Tranter and Selena Whitehead, and their bus driver, Raymond Head. I will be meeting with them on behalf of the member for Nipawin, at 2:20 and speaking with them over refreshments in the members' cafeteria. Will you please welcome them here and wish them a safe trip home.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce through you to the Assembly, the Saskatchewan high school boys curling championship from Greenall High School in Balgonie. They are sitting in the Speaker's gallery and I would ask them to stand and be acknowledged. They are accompanied by their coach, Dave Kernetsky. There are five; there were six at various times. I just want to give the assurance that any four in any combination were more than enough to win the championship. The members of the team, and I'll name all six, are Al Leippi, Rob Schneider, Murray Brandt, Don Gottselig, Ed Leippi, and Tim Sterzer. So, if they would stand and be acknowledged, I think all members will join with me in congratulating the boys high school champions of the province of Saskatchewan.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to the members of the Assembly and to you, Mr. Speaker, 22 students from Dr. Perry School who are in the Speaker's gallery. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Carol Hart, and four parents, Mrs. Schuster, Mrs. Sitoussee, Mrs. Ibbot, and Mrs. Kambeitz. I would ask the members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming this group to the Assembly this afternoon and I want to tell them that I will be meeting with them at 2:30 for pictures and refreshments.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS**

**Action to Combat Inflation**

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — I have a question to put to the Minister of Finance in light of today's announcement by the Bank of Canada of record high interest rates, rising to now 18.71

per cent, and also in light of a statement made by Mr. Bouey of the Bank of Canada. If I may read the statement, he said:

The inflationary psychology gripping the country has reached alarming proportions.

He cited the residential mortgage market boom despite rates of 17 per cent per year.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in light of the procrastination on behalf of the government in that it has taken no action to combat inflation, I would ask the minister today if he is now prepared, at least for one year, to freeze the rates of public utilities — telephone, natural gas and power rates — and either freeze or roll back to an acceptable level the 20 per cent sales tax on gasoline? Will he now look at the situation as being very serious and you, yourself, at this point, get serious with the problem that we are now faced with.

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the member that, indeed, we are always considering our options with respect to things we must do as a government, as they affect people who are feeling the impact of these high interest rates, which in themselves, I believe, are firmly contributing to our rate of inflation. I listened very carefully to what Mr. Bouey had to say. I also listened very carefully to what Mr. MacEachen had to say, when they recently spoke to a group of investors, I believe it was, in Toronto. They didn't indicate that they are going to be changing their policies very rapidly. I think that's rather unfortunate. As a matter of fact, I think it's deplorable.

We have, therefore, as a government (as was indicated in the budget which we introduced on March 5) provided a number of measures which we believe will help alleviate the impact that the inflationary period is having on citizens of Saskatchewan. That is why we have, along with the indexing of the income tax system, a saving in the full year to taxpayers of Saskatchewan of \$50 million, which will contribute in a big way toward that.

To respond directly to the member's question, we are not now contemplating the freezing of utility rates. We must keep in mind that the increases in our utility rates over the years in Saskatchewan have been lower than most other province's simply because we do have Crown corporations and do, as a government, have some input in establishing those rates, rather than turning decisions over to a public utilities review board as they do in other provinces, where the governments can wash their hands and take no responsibility.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Well, at the risk of getting into a debate, and I will not do that, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister how he can justify the statement he has just made with respect to utility rates when we see increases in, for example, natural gas of some 50 per cent, and in SGI rates of 48 per cent in 14 months. The cost of the gasoline sales tax will be a 100 per cent increase this year. To clear the matter so that the minister knows: we were paying 3 cents a gallon last year, and this year we'll be almost to the 6 cent level, depending on the price of gasoline. So, that is almost 100 per cent. Again, I would ask you, in light of those increases, will you discuss this with your cabinet and take action to reduce rates by rolling back or by putting a freeze on them, or will you do something to alleviate the situation that is facing the people of Saskatchewan today?

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, may I first correct the member who indicated that the gasoline tax last year was 3 cents a gallon. That's not right. It was 19 cents a gallon. It is now 23.1 cents a gallon. That is a very considerable difference from

what has been indicated.

As I have already said, Mr. Speaker, our gasoline tax in Saskatchewan is not out of line with the gasoline tax that exists in almost all the rest of Canada. In fact, it's the second lowest in Canada except, of course, for Alberta because, as we all know, there is no gasoline tax in Alberta. But then, it has other taxes that we don't have, such as health premiums, and the like.

As I have already indicated, we have measures now which were not necessarily provided in order to combat inflation or the high interest rates, but do have a significant input. The tax cut is one measure. We have programs in agriculture through FarmStart, which is another measure. We have assistance to home-owners in property improvement grants, and to renters in rent rebates, as well as the mortgage interest rebate program.

All of these are helping to some degree the taxpayers of Saskatchewan to at least absorb some of this inflation that we have, which we as a province cannot control. All we can do is provide some assistance. It is going to take a larger measure on the part of our national government to deal with it in any substantial way, when it comes to dealing with inflation, and when it comes to establishing a reasonable policy as it applies to interest rates.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Just to correct my statement, I meant the gas tax, the insurance tax on the gas tax being doubled from 3 cents to almost 6 cents. The gas tax itself will be from 19 cents to 20 per cent, which will be more than the 21 cents the minister indicated. One only has to look at the estimates of this year's budget to indicate that it is a 20 per cent increase from that. My question is: will you look at the utility rates?

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, we are always looking at utility rates, because we review them before the increases. Of course, the Crown corporations, SPC and Sask Tel, will review the rates, as will the boards of those corporations, as will the government when they are brought forward.

### **Mortgage Interest Rate Policy**

**MR. LANE:** — In light of statements by the head of the Bank of Canada that interest rates could continue to climb, would the Minister of Finance be prepared to reconsider government policy and initiate a "made in Saskatchewan" mortgage rate policy to subsidize the interest rate for home mortgages in the province of Saskatchewan to allow people to obtain homes at reasonable cost and to stimulate the house building industry in this province?

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, we already subsidize the mortgage rates through our mortgage interest tax credit, a program which we established a year or two years ago. We are not in a position to consider subsidizing a policy of high interest rates or counteracting it in the way the member opposite indicates. The amount of money that would be required to make up for the kinds of national problems we face because of high interest, is something which is beyond the capacity of any one province. It will take a bigger effort; it will require a change in policy. I come back to my initial answer that we already have a program which to some degree subsidizes the mortgage interest rates through the mortgage interest tax credit.

**MR. LANE:** — It is obvious that the existing policies have not in any significant way stimulated housing starts or made housing more accessible. I think the minister will agree with that. Is it not time to reconsider your position and a made in Saskatchewan interest policy? It could be done extremely easily. We give interest free moneys to Crown corporations. Why isn't the same benefit (and I'm not talking interest free, but certainly a subsidy) given to Crown corporations extended to the average taxpayer in Saskatchewan, particularly in these inflationary times?

**HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether we are talking about the same thing. But if you want to take it in that context, we do now, because of the well-being of our economy, provide direct assistance to Saskatchewan people. We have a property improvement grant program, which is a major rebate on property taxes. We have the mortgage interest tax credit which will be an estimated \$12 million return to people who do not pay taxes directly, but do pay taxes indirectly when they rent a suite. So, essentially, we are already doing what the member is asking us to do. Maybe he would do it in a different way, but we are still talking about the same dollars.

### **Meals on Wheels Program**

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Social Services. What are the guidelines or the criteria under the home care program for the eligibility for Meals on Wheels?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to state to the member that to be eligible, individuals should not be able to prepare meals on their own.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Could you tell me why an 88 year-old widower, who lost his wife about three months ago and who has not been accustomed to any type of housework throughout his life, would be told by the home care board, "You can certainly put a potato in the pot," and was cut off from home care Meals on Wheels?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the member is well aware of whose responsibility it is to decide whether people will receive a meal on a day-to-day basis. It's a local decision made by the board. I don't know whether the member wants the Government of Saskatchewan to become involved in the day-to-day operation of locally elected boards. I'm sure that is the case; he would like it to be centralized in Regina. But I would like to tell him that it is not our intention to become involved at that level.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — A final supplementary. As the minister responsible for the home care program in Saskatchewan, would you investigate the case if I give you the name? Surely to goodness, if we are providing home care, a person 88 years of age should qualify for this type of Meals on Wheels. Would you not agree?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that I have many old friends in my constituency 88 years of age and over who can prepare their meals and, in fact, do. To say that because someone is 88 years of age he can't prepare his own meals is being a little bit ridiculous.

If you have a case which you feel we should be looking into, I would expect that you

would have sent a letter to my office, and we would have checked it out. To say that a man of the earth can't prepare a meal, I think, is underestimating the people of Saskatchewan.

### **Meeting with Federal Energy Minister**

**MR. ANDREW:** — My question is to the Minister of Mineral Resources. Mr. Minister, the first quarter records of several oil companies have come down. Union Oil, for example, has indicated in its annual report that it is losing 85 cents a barrel on production in Saskatchewan; BP is losing 40 cents a barrel on production in Saskatchewan; Mobil Oil is losing 60 cents a barrel on oil produced in Saskatchewan. It seems to me that the energy problem is becoming very serious in this province as the cutbacks come.

You have rejected the suggestion of rolling back royalties. My question to you, Mr. Minister, is: in view of the serious situation in the oil industry today, are you prepared, rather than sitting back and waiting to see what Alberta and Ottawa are going to do, to take the initiative to meet with Mr. Lalonde and to bring those matters to his attention? Would you act in some way to try to address that serious question as to oil production in Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. COWLEY:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've seen the same reports as the member opposite has. I think the impact on our oil industry is significant, as it is in Alberta. The response by the provincial government in Alberta is similar in many ways to the one taken by us in Saskatchewan. They've gone even further by cutting back on their production, as well.

With respect to meeting with Mr. Lalonde, I am quite prepared to meet with Mr. Lalonde when it seems useful to have such a meeting. My officials are in contact regularly with officials in Ottawa. At this point, given the likelihood of a meeting in two or three weeks between Mr. Lalonde and Mr. Leitch, it seems to me there is no particular end to be gained by asking for a meeting with Mr. Lalonde. I have no objection to having a meeting but it seems to me that I'm not prepared to call one unless I have something to offer. In terms of the information, Mr. Lalonde and his department receive information with respect to the oil industry in Saskatchewan on a regular basis from my department and from other sources.

**MR. ANDREW:** — A supplementary question. The problem in Saskatchewan, as you are aware, Mr. Minister, is that it differs from Alberta in the unprofitability of even producing the wells here. Alberta is shutting down the wells as a strategy by the government.

Is it not time? I gather that you have communicated this to Mr. Lalonde. Has he given you any indication that he looks at the Saskatchewan situation differently than the province of Alberta, and whether there could be any remedy for the Saskatchewan problem without necessarily addressing the entire question?

**HON. MR. COWLEY:** — The answer to the first part of your question is yes. The answer to the second part of your question is that he has given no indication of any particular strategy for addressing Saskatchewan's particular problems. That's where it's at.

### **Eligibility Under the Home Care Program**

**MR. SWAN:** — I have a question for the Minister of Social Services. My question relates,

to some extent, to the question asked by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley. Is it not true that a person who is 88 years of age, who happens to own land with a value in excess of \$125,000, would be ineligible to receive assistance under home care because of that assessment being in excess of that \$125,000?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, it is not true that he wouldn't be able to get assistance through home care. Anyone in the province who is unable, for example, to prepare his or her own meal is eligible to receive home care. To say that he is not eligible for home care is a misstatement of fact.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Minister, at a meeting in Rosetown, when you were asked the question about your \$125,000 eligibility, you said that if they had that much land they would not be eligible — if they had that kind of assessment. Can you tell the Assembly how the \$125,000 eligibility applies in home care?

**HON. MR. LINGENFELTER:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to inform the Assembly, and the member for Rosetown-Elrose, that the question in Rosetown was one of whether or not there would be a subsidy, if I remember the question correctly. They would not be eligible for subsidy, but they would be eligible for the program to be delivered to them.

**MR. SWAN:** — My question to you was about the eligibility for assistance under home care. You said no. Now, you say he is eligible for home care but not assistance. There is the problem.

### **Government Steps to Combat Crime Increases**

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Attorney General. Mr. Minister, you have in recent months indicated that you would take steps to suppress crime and show leadership in that regard. Recent events would indicate that you possibly wouldn't know crime if it were sitting across the desk from you.

In light of recent events — only within the last week there were two stabbings within a two-block radius — would you indicate to this House what positive measures you have taken in recent months in order to allay the concerns of the Saskatchewan people as they relate to the moderate upswing in crime in the province?

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Well, in fact, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's statistics, I believe, are in error. I would like to get more complete information to answer at a subsequent time. The rate of crime in the province of Saskatchewan is certainly no greater and is perhaps less than the rate in provinces to our immediate west — Alberta and British Columbia. I think we're probably a little ahead of Manitoba, but I would even question that. In any event, the Government of Saskatchewan continues to do the kinds of things we have been doing. We have one of the highest per capita police force commitments in the province of Saskatchewan of any province in Canada. We propose to do all we can to streamline the courts in efficiency and dispatch of people who come before the law.

My colleague, the Minister of Social Services, is still heading one of the most progressive penal reform systems to try to make sure there is no return to crime once we apprehend the individuals involved. Over and above that, in the end result, it also requires attitudinal changes on the part of many people stemming essentially, in my judgment, in the home first.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Attorney General, there's no question that organized crime is getting its foot in the door in the province of Saskatchewan. There seem to be indications of that. It was not so long ago — in spite of the fact which you've given me that we have a higher per capita rate of police forcing in Saskatchewan than in any other province — that the city of Regina had the highest per capita crime rate. I'm sure you're well aware of that particular fact.

Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General raises a most important point, the point which I want to make: people, generally speaking, feel (and I believe it is a fact) that, if you have a higher per capita rate of policing, you will have a lower per capita rate of crime. That having been established (and I think you would agree with me on that), what is the current situation between the provincial government and the federal government in terms of their negotiations with refers to policing costs?

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I would dispute the hon. member's judgment that the more per capita police force there is, the lower is the reported incidence of crime. In fact, it's the exact opposite. The higher per capita police force per provincial area (or per unit of measurement), the higher the recording of the rate of incidence of crime is. That's because if you have more police officers, you have more apprehensions, whereas if you have fewer police officers, you have fewer apprehensions and detections and less recording of the incidence of crime. As a consequence, you will have a lower per capita rate in some areas. So I think the hon. member's assumption is incorrect.

On the second aspect of the statement, which deals with the question of our state of negotiations, I can tell the hon. member that essentially there is no change from the negotiations I reported to the House two or three weeks ago, when the hon. member for Qu'Appelle asked me this question. (I believe it was the member for Qu'Appelle). There has been no change in circumstances. We are still waiting for an appropriate meeting of federal and provincial ministers. I don't know if there are any officials meeting at the present time, which have taken place or are about to be held. I guess we're more or less at a standstill in trying to negotiate an appropriate cost-sharing formula with the federal government.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Attorney General, the information you have given me would indicate that, if we reduced the number of police forces which we have (or police personnel per capita), then we would have a reduced level of crime. I wonder if that's the reason you're not pushing harder to negotiate a settlement between you and the federal government in terms of policing?

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Of course, that is, with all due respect to the hon. member, a specious question. No attorney general would want to logically say that if we had no police we would have no crime. That is the obvious conclusion of what the member is saying. That is not our position. I'm very proud to be a member of a government which has given much support to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and to the other city police forces in the province of Saskatchewan, giving us, as I say, perhaps the highest per capita percentage of police in the general population.

The question is: are we pushing for a settlement with the federal government on the RCMP contract? The answer is yes, I would very much like to come to a satisfactory conclusion, but I draw to the attention of the hon. member that there is a bit disparity between what the federal government would want us, as provincial governments, to pay for policing and what we, according to our budgets, are able to pay. It wants the

provincial portion to increase to 75 per cent. We are currently at 56 per cent. It has not budged off 75 per cent. We've indicated a willingness to go higher than 56 per cent. There seems to be no movement on the part of Mr. Kaplan or the federal authorities whatsoever. We are united with the other seven provinces which have contract forces. So we're pushing, but there's a certain limitation as to what can be done.

### **Investigation of Proposed Sale of SGI Building**

**MR. LANE:** — I wonder if the Attorney General is prepared to report to the Assembly on any investigation he has done on a question which I asked last week about an attempt by SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) to sell its building (in its words) to a company controlled by people with extensive criminal backgrounds? What are the results of your investigation into the matter?

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I may not have precisely in my mind the form of the question that the member for Qu'Appelle asked last week. I think the short answer from my department's information to me is that some time ago the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were, in fact, (perhaps "investigating" is not quite the right word) aware of certain activities dealing with the principles of the company involved, which is subject to some questioning and litigation by the opposition in the government. Essentially that's where the matter has rested or has stayed.

**MR. LANE:** — I asked you as well if you would advise the Assembly when the RCM Police advised SGI, if they did, as to their concerns. Would you advise, as well, on your report on the number of proved wiretaps in the province of Saskatchewan, whether or not that particular company was one of those.

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, my department report makes no indication that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police informed people at SGI. I have simply no knowledge of that, and quite frankly, I don't expect that I can get that from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. As the hon. member says, there are even limits to the scope of information that an Attorney General should properly request of an RCM Police force, or any force for that matter, during the course of investigation or concern.

On the question of the wiretap information, I would like to get further information, although my recollection is that the federal statute requirements say that that information is not available — who is being wiretapped. I could be in error there. It has been quite some number of years since I was obliged to answer a question of this nature, and I'll have to get more information on that aspect.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

#### **Bill No. 101 — An Act to amend The Personal Property Security Act.**

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that a bill to amend The Personal Property Security Act be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion agreed to and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

#### **Bill No. 102 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code (No. 4)**

**HON. MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that a bill to amend The Saskatchewan



Human Rights Code (No. 4) be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion agreed to and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MLA All-Stars Defeat Press Club

**MR. BANDA:** — Mr. Speaker, a very major sporting event took place last night in Regina. Before I comment on that I just want to quote from a note that was sent to the members about a week ago. It said this:

Last year the press gallery club demolished separate government and opposition teams. The scores are just too embarrassing to print. The press gallery also dumped an MLA all-star hockey team a few weeks ago. This time the press gallery is hoping they'll meet some opposition on the playing field.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there comes a time of reckoning, and today is a very sad day for members of the press in Saskatchewan. If members will note, they are all wearing black armbands. Last night at Rambler Park the press club was literally smashed to the ground, Mr. Speaker, by an MLA all-star team. After giving the press a three run lead in the game, they were battered to a seven to four defeat. The press club had much difficulty getting that ball out of the infield due to the errorless playing of the members and the lightning pitching that took place. The press couldn't hit what they couldn't see, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BANDA:** — Lucky Mike, up there, happened to hit a home run which, with some difficulty, he turned into a three bagger. That was the most dangerous hit of the game. Unfortunately his colleagues didn't even bring him home and he was left on third base. Even if the members of the press club were humiliated and shocked at the performance, with a little bit of discipline they showed good sportsmanship and admitted that they had been beaten by a better team.

However, I hear talk around that they are going to protest the game. They have yet to find a reason. They are looking at possibly blaming the press umpire or the press score keeper. The only other reason would be that they had three practices and they had already played a league game. Unfortunately, they're still looking at that. I understand they have put in a request for a grudge match. I believe the members of the Assembly would accept that under the condition that we give them one more year to practise.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BERNTSON:** — Just to join with the member for Redberry, Mr. Speaker. I want to set out some of the planning which went into this particular game. The MLA all-star team sat down and worked out some considerable strategy. We put all the left wingers in the infield and I understand that the member for Thunder Creek was dickering for a good deal on a membership later last night. But in keeping with their philosophical leanings, they wanted total control and they had it. They did a terrific job of the infield.

Our offensive strategy was to bring in the big hitters from the right wing, the Tory side of the legislature and, of course, it worked. There was some talk a little later in the evening

about the umpire perhaps having taken her training from Mr. Speaker. I don't think that is true because I've never seen her in the gallery, so if she has taken training, she didn't get it here.

About halfway through the ball game there was also some talk that perhaps we should ease off a little bit because after all we need these guys to get the message out and perhaps they would be feeling a little vindictive or a little inferior. So, some of our guys were thinking that wasn't the way to go. The more we thought about it, the more we thought perhaps there was nobody who had more right to feel inferior, so we just went on and waxed them anyway. With those few remarks, I would join with the member for Redberry and accept the challenge under any terms and conditions which you might lay out because I think we can handle them in any event.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I would suspect if there are any other responses we'll see them in another form.

### **Congratulations — Nancy Jewitt**

**MRS. DUNCAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to inform the members of the Assembly of another sporting event which brought honor to Saskatchewan. I would like to tell the members that 19-year-old Nancy Jewitt, a former student in my constituency, who lives at Webb, Saskatchewan, won the Canadian senior women's judo championship in Lethbridge on the weekend. Nancy now goes on to New York City for the world women's competition and I am sure all members would join with me in congratulating Nancy and wishing her luck in the next step in her career.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

## **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

### **Review of the Legislative Library**

**HON. MR. McARTHUR:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, I would like to lay on the Table the report of the special committee on the review of the Legislative Library. I want to make a few brief remarks and, at the conclusion of them, I would like to move that the report of the special committee on the review of the Legislative Library be now concurred in by this House.

By way of background, Mr. Speaker, on May 3, 1979, this Assembly passed a resolution constituting a special committee of the legislature to conduct an inquiry into the role of the Legislative Library. I know I speak for the members of the committee when I say that the committee wishes to express its sincere thanks to all individuals and organizations who made written and oral representations to the committee. The information presented and the opinions expressed were of valuable assistance in assessing the present situation and in the preparation of this report.

I should inform all hon. members that all research material is on file for future reference in the Legislative Assembly office. The committee wishes to express its appreciation to Gordon Barnhart, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly; Gwenn Ronyk, Deputy Clerk, who acted as secretary to the committee; David Mitchell, Clerk Assistant Procedural, who helped out a great deal; Carol Adams, the research assistant to the committee; and the

legislative librarian, Christine MacDonald.

I want to particularly thank Carol Adams for her invaluable assistance. Without her the report would not have been possible and I think all members of the committee agree with me in that judgment.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. McARTHUR:** — The committee received written briefs from interested individuals and organizations. The briefs were presented by the original authors or group spokesmen in Regina during August and October of 1980. Each presentation was followed by a discussion and a question period. The committee also interviewed a number of selected individuals with a special interest and with special concerns regarding the Legislative Library.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Legislative Library is widely acclaimed for its rich and historic collection, for its predominant stature among the government and law libraries on the Prairies, and for its traditions, which originate with the territorial government. When one possesses a valuable resource, it is sensible to appraise from time to time how that resource is being used, maintained and enriched in the service of its trustees, the members of the Legislative Assembly. The opportunity to be taken is clear — to establish goals and expectations for the library which will support members throughout the 1980s, to renew the interest and commitment of the Assembly in the valuable resource available to it, and to set the library itself on a path which can meet those goals and cultivate that interest.

The report contains much data, and also the results of our deliberations regarding the current state and condition of the Legislative Library. I refer hon. members to the body of the report for further insight into our findings. I just might mention that the report contains 28 recommendations dealing with: (1) the role of the Legislative Library, (2) functions and services that should be provided, (3) the collection itself, (4) the relationship that should exist between the Legislative Library and the Assembly, (5) space requirements and space needs, (6) staffing and finance.

I can't cover all the recommendations here, given their length and breadth. However, I would just like to mention a few in general that I consider to be important for the members to consider.

1. We are recommending that the hours of service should be altered so that during session the library will meet the hours from Monday to Thursday of 8:30 to 10 p.m. and on Friday of 8:30 to 5. Also, the library will meet the regular hours of 8:30 to 5 when the legislature is not in session.

2. Improved information services should be available through the library to members, including the maintenance of a depository for all Saskatchewan government publications ratified by this legislature, including systems for making known the availability of such publications on a timely and readily accessible basis (and this is a modification of current practice), and also the implementation of a computerized on-line information system.

3. The enhancement and rationalization of the collection including increased funds for this purpose.

4. The establishment of a branch outside of the Legislative Building located within the new archives building to hold information not needed immediately by members. This needs to be done, Mr. Speaker, because of the limitations this building places upon the availability of space.

5. The addition of staff positions to meet the requirements for enhanced services.

Mr. Speaker, in the view of the members of this committee, we have a good library and I am sure all the members of this Assembly will agree. However, we have concluded that the measures we recommend can further enhance and support this important service. The library and the information it provides is essential if members are to fulfill their responsibilities in an increasingly complex world.

May I say in closing that our committee confirmed what we already knew from experience — that we have a dedicated and competent staff in our Legislative Library who have, through unstinting effort, made it possible for us to enjoy the best service possible within existing resources, space and facilities. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all members for the contribution they made to the committee and for the work that was put into the results of this committee.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Rosthern:

That the report of the special committee on the review of the Legislative Library be now concurred in.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KATZMAN:** — With pleasure, I second the motion moved by the Minister of Education. The library study, which has taken us almost two years, we hope will benefit the members of this House in the future. Let me first say that we must give special thanks to the members of the library staff who worked so diligently with the constraints they have had over the year. Hopefully, our report will assist them in providing better services to all members.

To Carol Adams, who is in the Speaker's gallery today, our undying thanks for a job well done. Without her assistance, I don't know whether our report would have been done at this time. To the members of the committee, who spent many hours of their leisure time away from the House studying the library and the consequences that are happening in other areas of the province, our thanks, as well.

Mr. Speaker, some of the main concerns of the library are its role and the services it should provide for the members; the importance of the special collection, as was mentioned by the minister; and the attempt to extend the hours during the session to give better services to all members of the Legislative Assembly, so that when the House is not sitting over the supper hour, they will have time to do their research. One of the biggest recommendations we will make is for on-line services of information for all the members, and we hope to get sufficient funds to make those services available to all members.

Mr. Speaker, two years work is contained in this document. We think it will be of lasting benefit to all members, and hopefully will make the library much more usable for all the members of the House. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to see this tabled today

and I hope all members will concur in the report.

**MR. WHITE:** — Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to say a few words upon the presentation of this report. First, I want to thank the members of the House for putting me on the committee. I have always been interested in the Legislative Library and the opportunity to serve on this committee was very worth-while. It was an excellent experience.

While I have the opportunity, I would like to congratulate everyone associated with the committee. Our technical adviser on library services, Mrs. Carol Adams, first of all, provided us with a great deal of information and invaluable insights about the library. Without her assistance, I think it is perfectly safe to say that we wouldn't have a report anywhere near the quality of the one just placed before the House. I think it wouldn't be untrue to say, too, that we wouldn't have any report at all today without her activities. The House would still be waiting.

Our secretaries, Ms. Ronyk and Mr. Mitchell, worked very hard to expedite the business of the committee, arranging trips out of the province and doing all the other necessary work. Suggestions offered by your librarian, Miss MacDonald, and the various people who appeared before the committee were also very valuable to members of the committee.

I would also like to say a few words about fellow MLAs on the committee, Mr. Speaker. I can't speak too highly of their performance throughout. On the basis of my observations, I would say that everyone gave their best and were always open-minded. There were arguments on various matters, but people could be persuaded to change initial opinions. There was never the slightest hint of party considerations or divisions along party lines, and I think that's excellent.

It was a pleasure to work on the subcommittee in the last few weeks with the hon. member for Rosthern, with our adviser, and with the secretary. All efforts, I think, you could say were directed toward getting to the precise desires of the committee. On a somewhat lighter side, I think, you could say, it was also very enjoyable to sit for some time on a plane with the hon. member for Indian Head-Wolseley and to talk about a variety of subjects, as well as go on what you might call the McArthur tour of the Toronto subway and eating establishments while down there.

In closing, I would urge all members of the House to concur in the report.

Motion agreed to.

## **GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

### **COMMITTEE OF FINANCE**

#### **CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOW**

#### **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

#### **Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10**

#### **Item 1 (continued)**

**MR. THATCHER:** — Mr. Chairman, I would like briefly to move into an area that has been brought up in question period a variety of times, that is the intention of the government to interfere with the medium of cable television and the removal of beer and wine ads.

Mr. Premier, we have gone at this in a variety of ways. Initially, I would like to go at the prime defence which has been used by both you and the Attorney General as a justification for removing the beer and wine ads from American cable television. As the Premier knows, the vast majority of the products advertised on American television is not available in Canada. The exceptions, of course, are some of the California wines — not very many of them and, I suppose, the Budweiser beer (even though it is not made in the United States.) But by and large the bulk of the products has not been available in Saskatchewan for sale — the exception during the period of time since cable television arrived in Saskatchewan has been the wine.

Mr. Premier, if I have interpreted your position correctly, your government takes the attitude that liquor advertising encourages consumption. You are in effect saying that these ads must be taken off because just the sight of anything that may have alcohol in it may encourage people who do not now consume to start consuming or encourage those who do to increase consumption.

Mr. Premier, I would like to draw to your attention the report of the 1979-80 Saskatchewan Alcoholism Commission. I would like to draw to your attention the number of rehabilitations. We have some numbers here which cover the period since cable television finally arrived in Saskatchewan. I don't know how meaningful these figures are but to briefly summarize them, last year the number of rehabilitations was down 25 per cent. The number of people who went through the rehabilitation department was down 25 per cent. Now, that has to mean something. Even more important is the annual report of the Saskatchewan Liquor Board. Again, Mr. Premier, on page 10 of the Saskatchewan Liquor Board report, the figures are available and these ads were on cable television. You can argue all you wish that consumption may go up but unfortunately, the figures don't bear you out.

Mr. Premier, I suggest to you, that your attitude in this regard is sanctimoniously hypocritical and I think you are simply carrying through with some bad legislation. Frankly, if I read between the lines, I feel that you wish you'd never heard of that bill a couple of years ago. And probably, if you had a graceful way out, you wish you could tear it up. You think you are caught with it, and so you have to proceed.

Mr. Premier, it amazes me that you zero in on these ads, because I find them very innocuous compared to other advertising on both American and Canadian television. Maybe it depends on what doesn't bother you personally. I think the most offensive ads on television are the ones that advertise female hygienic products. You've seen the ads. Some of them literally make you sick. You know the products: the beltless, the double adhesive, etc. I find them obscene compared to these innocuous beer and wine ads. Frankly, some of these beer ads are pretty well done. They are some of the funniest. In fact, I often wonder how the beer companies think that it helps them in their product. If you watch a football game or a basketball game, very often an ad comes on where Rodney Dangerfield conducts a meeting of the board. I think it is a pretty funny commercial. I don't see where it sells very much beer for them but as far as corrupting anyone, the corruption escapes me.

And so, Mr. Premier, in light of the numbers that I'm putting forward to you (and these are your own numbers in the report of the Saskatchewan Liquor Board), which show very clearly consumption hasn't gone up, I have to ask you how can you consistently hang your hat on this business that if these American ads are there the consumption is going to go up? It hasn't happened in Ontario where much more extensive liquor

advertising is legal. In fact the products are available on the shelf. It hasn't happened in Alberta or B.C. Apparently it hasn't happened in the United States.

Why is Saskatchewan an island, an oasis, where, if our people are corrupted at the sight of these beer and wine ads, they're suddenly going to go out and buy and consume volumes and volumes and volumes? It simply isn't going to happen. Your own numbers (your own liquor board) say it hasn't happened. Therefore, my question is: why do you persist on this ludicrous, nonsensical, grossly hypocritical position as far as cable television is concerned?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, the purpose of the current legislation is not primarily to enforce or to try to set any standard of aesthetics or good taste and, accordingly, there well may be ads which offend the hon. member's sense of aesthetics or good taste more than the liquor ads. That, in our judgment, is not relevant. The purpose is not to enforce any standard of morality and, therefore, there may be other TV presentations which, in his judgment, lack a sense of morality much more than any liquor advertising does. The purpose is to attempt to promote standards of public health and public safety. Those are the reasons.

People may or may not hold the view that the consumption of alcoholic beverages is moral or immoral. That is not a point of view which our government is attempting to promulgate. What we are trying to say is that the consumption of alcoholic beverages is generally a danger to health and to public safety. I'm not suggesting that any consumption is a danger. I am suggesting that there is a high correlation between the level of consumption of alcoholic beverages and the level of health-related problems due to that consumption, or the level of road traffic and other safety problems due to that consumption. That is a view that has been held by our government, and previous governments of Saskatchewan, going back a good number of decades. We have prohibited the advertising of alcoholic beverages on radio and television.

I suppose I cannot say what motivated the people to make that change in the law many decades ago, but I do say that it is retained, and has been retained in the last several decades, primarily because people were concerned about the dangers to health and safety by the use of alcoholic beverages. We believe that it's a good idea to limit, indeed prohibit, this advertising of beer and wine on regular radio and television, and we believe that if we are to be consistent, we ought to carry the same restrictions to cable television.

It is argued that the consumption of alcohol has not gone up, and I think that is true in absolute terms, and I'm glad of that. It has been argued that the number of people who are presenting themselves for rehabilitation because of acute alcoholism is not increasing, and I'm glad to hear that.

I don't think anyone disputes the point that there is advertising of beverage alcohol in Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia, as mentioned by the hon. member, and the consumption of alcoholic beverages per capita is higher in Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and Manitoba than it is in Saskatchewan. You mentioned the United States. I do not have the figures for all of the states, but as a general proposition the consumption of alcoholic beverages per capita is higher in virtually every state than it is in Saskatchewan.

I am not attributing this primarily to the fact that we don't have advertising on radio and

television, but I think it makes its contribution. Generally speaking, rural societies consume less alcohol per capita than do urban societies, and we are a rural society. But I think the fact that we haven't advertised alcohol on regular radio and television has been a positive contributing factor, a positive fact which we would like to continue on cable television.

Some of the problems surrounding advertising of liquor on cable television are illustrated by the fact that the Budweiser brand, which is widely advertised in the United States and is on cable television, is now sold here. One might well expect that if the policy of handling advertising on cable television but not on regular radio and television continued, we would see people here bottling the Miller brand, or the Michelob brand, or the Pabst brand, or the Schlitz brand or some other brand — Olympia or any other widely selling brand in the United States.

I think the view that the dangers to health and safety increase with the level of alcoholic consumption is widely accepted and was accepted by the legislative committee on liquor legislation and by this legislature, five or six years ago. I believe the view that advertising over a lengthy period of time adds to consumption is widely accepted. There can be no other purpose for the advertising unless it's brand preference. I suggest that it is unlikely that liquor companies would advertise extensively over long periods of time if the purpose was not to increase sales.

Accordingly, I am of the view that the case, while not airtight, has been reasonably well established. If we are to decrease the consumption of alcoholic beverage and thereby decrease the abuses flowing from overconsumption, we should attempt to limit advertising. We have done that on radio and television for 30 years or 40 years. We are continuing the same logic with respect to cable television. To us it makes sense.

**MR. THATCHER:** — Listening to the Premier outline his defence, I can't help but think of the benevolent big brother government looking over our shoulders, knowing what is best for us, and knowing that it really knows what's best. Whether the individual himself is aware of it, certainly big brother government is. Mr. Premier, any liquor company will tell you that advertising merely changes its share of the market. It doesn't increase the consumption. It changes its percentage of the market, and nothing more. Labatt's, Molsons, anybody will tell you that.

Here is where the sanctimonious hypocrisy fits into this. The Premier talks about limiting consumption; he talks about the big brother attitude of, "We, the government know what is best for your health even though you, the individual, may not." But the Premier has the key on the liquor store doors. You are the ones who streamline the liquor stores so there are no line-ups. You are the ones who extend the hours. You own the stores. If you want to limit consumption, you have the power to do so. Close the stores. Conversely, if you don't want to completely shut it off, if you believe in what you just outlined, you need only have the stores open a couple of days a week. I think they are now open six days a week. I think even Moose Jaw has progressed to that.

Consequently, after the member for Moose Jaw North failed repeatedly to get it to six days, I came in and again did your constituency work for you. That is exactly what happened. It has happened so many times. But, I will return to the subject. The key on the liquor stores is strictly in your hands. If you wish to limit consumption (if that is the goal of your government) and if you know what is best for the individual better than the individual knows himself, then why don't you take action via the Saskatchewan Liquor Board?



What concerns me about the intrusion into cable television is the precedent it is setting. I think the CRTC in one of its very few wise moves decreed that signals shall come in uninterrupted. In doing that it very effectively eliminated some control by either the federal or provincial governments.

Mr. Premier, I am concerned that the precedent of eliminating what is now simply a beer and a wine commercial may ultimately be something else. I am concerned about the precedent that is set and to what it is going to lead, because once you do this, what happens down the road? For the life of me, I cannot think of a more useless expenditure of money than a capitalization of \$200,000 and \$100,000 a year operating costs which, with inflation, will be \$110,000 next year; then it's \$150,000 within a couple of years and you know the way bureaucracy goes. Pretty soon we're going to have a Crown corporation in charge of deleting beer and wine commercials. That's been the history. I cannot think of a more useless purpose for spending money than for the deletion of those commercials.

Please spare me the Attorney General's argument. "I'm sorry the hon. member isn't in favor of liquor rehabilitation. I'm sorry that the hon. member is in favor of unlimited consumption of alcohol, etc. etc." Please spare me that one.

Mr. Premier, I repeat again, I believe your position is sanctimonious hypocrisy and a thorough waste of money — a complete waste of money — at the time we're being bilked by SGI and level 4 rates are going up. My goodness, there must be a thousand places where you could spend the \$300,000 this year, every one of them much more productive than what you're proposing in this business.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — A few comments. First, while it may be the view of some that the purpose of advertising alcoholic beverages or most other products is simply to get people to switch from one brand to another, that is certainly not my view of most of the liquor ads I see or most of the other ads I see. With some of the soft drink ads I suspect that there is a suggestion that one should switch. Almost all of them, particularly liquor ones, tend to be what I call lifestyle ads, which suggest that the consumption of alcoholic beverages adds generally to the joy and pleasantness of life. It wouldn't matter, in the impact of that ad, whether one were drinking Carling's or Molson's or Labatt's. I invite anyone to look at the ads which one sees about beer at the picnics and these sorts of things. See if they aren't essentially lifestyle ads; they are not designed to get you to drink Labatt's as opposed to Molson's, but rather to get you to believe that it is pleasant to have beer at a picnic. It may or may not be. I am just saying that's the purpose of the ad. It's designed to convince one of that.

Secondly, the member is obviously concerned about the precedent and he asks what is going to happen next. I obviously can't tell him what's going to happen next. I can say it's developing slowly, because we have had the prohibitions of these ads on regular radio and television for 30 or 40 years and nothing else has happened. Presumably we have another 30 or 40 years if we prohibit it on cable television before something else happens.

Whatever comes from the prohibition of liquor ads on the electronic media, whatever else it leads to, is coming very slowly. We have had 30 or 35 years of it and nothing else has come yet, nor do I think there is anything going to come, whether it's on regular radio and television or on cable.

I think we have a difference of view with the hon. member on some things like the consumption of alcohol and perhaps other particular lifestyles we may have. We believe, as a government, they are in general terms undesirable and it would be better if people didn't do it. On the other hand, we do not think that it is the role of government to prohibit the consumption of alcoholic beverages. It did not prove, in the long run, publicly acceptable in the United States and would not prove acceptable in Canada today. I'm not saying it would be a good idea if it were publicly acceptable but I am saying that a government, which believes that a particular activity by the public has important and unfortunate health and safety consequences, but believes that it is not reasonable or proper to prohibit it, is left with the device of attempting to persuade people not to consume alcohol and to prohibit people from persuading them to consume alcohol.

On the one hand, we have a prohibition against ads which attempt to persuade people to consume alcohol, as we believe, and on the other hand, we have something like an Aware program which tries to persuade people not to drink alcohol or to be moderate in their consumption of it. We think that is a sensible approach. I'm sure that overeating has important unfortunate health consequences but we're not likely to attempt to prohibit people from overeating; we do, however, try to persuade them not to overeat, through the Feelin' Good program. Similarly, we don't say that people must exercise; we do attempt to persuade them to exercise with programs like Feelin' Good at the provincial level, and participation at the federal level.

It is a governmental method, used by governments other than our own, as well as our own to attempt to dissuade people from conduct which appears undesirable from a health and safety point of view, or to persuade them to adopt conduct which is desirable from a health and safety point of view. It seems to us reasonable and plausible. It seems to us not to be particularly hypocritical or sanctimonious, and it is directed at improving the health and safety of the public, without imposing the heavy hand of government by saying, "Thou must."

**MR. THATCHER:** — Well, as usual the Premier makes something sound plausible which isn't even remotely sensible. I still hold the belief that you put through a bill a couple of years ago that you wish you had never seen nor conceived, and you're caught with it. But if there were a graceful way out of it without losing face, I believe you would forget it. But again, we're into something like arguing religion and, obviously, we're not going to change each other's mind.

If I may move to another area associated with it, perhaps the Premier could briefly inform us, while we're on the morality kick of keeping people from overindulging, how he can justify a medium known as Teletheatre. It makes a practice, particularly when it requires a boost in sales or hookups, of bringing in what can be termed in some quarters as blue movies, which in most other parts of North America are shown only after 11:30 p.m. or in the early morning hours. How can the Premier justify having a medium (and what is now, for practical purposes, a government medium) show blue movies at prime time?

Would the government have us believe that the beer and the wine ads are going to corrupt us into excess consumption of alcohol, and yet have us believe that the blue movies of Teletheatre which is 50 per cent owned by this government and incidentally isn't a very good medium . . . If there is any sort of display of lifestyle, or a putting forward of a way to live (using the Premier's terminology) by the beer ads, what is being put forward in some of these uncut blue movies? And what is the difference? How can

you justify it in a medium which is 50 per cent owned and controlled by your government, and in which the people making the selections are totally controlled by your government, even beyond the official censor? You can suggest that this is not a lifestyle. You may argue that these programs are published well in advance. You don't have to watch if you don't want. True, you don't have to watch the beer ads either. They are going to be on but if you don't want to watch them, you don't watch them.

The programs are published in advance and you can argue that you should keep your children away from the television set. That is not a realistic proposition. You can say it's expensive. Well, it's about the same price as cable. In fact, with the latest price hike in cable, it's about equivalent. I think it's about \$9.50 to \$10 and just as readily available. Again, these movies are depicting a lifestyle, and it would appear that your government must approve of some of the things which are portrayed in these movies. How can you equate these as being right? If lifestyle is what you're going to hang your hat on, what's the difference between what these blue moves are depicting and the innocuousness of some of these beer and wine commercials?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, that I did not make myself clear. I am not objecting particularly to the lifestyle portrayed in the liquor ads. I am objecting to any impact they may have on increasing the consumption of alcoholic beverages. I am refuting the argument put forward by the hon. member that all the liquor ads are brand preference ads. They are not the same liquor ads I am watching. The liquor ads I am watching would be equally valid as advertising if you change the label on the bottle. They're not ones that say, "Drink Pepsi and don't drink Coke"; they are not that at all. They are saying, "Beer is good," and that is an equally good message whether it's Molson's or Labatt's. I'm not a connoisseur of these ads because I only see them, by and large, when I am outside the province. I see them in my hotel room and I'm spending a lot of time outside the province these days.

I want particularly to hone in on the point that the hon. member makes. He believes that our objection to the consumption of alcoholic beverages is something dealing with our belief that this will corrupt somebody. I tried to make clear that our feeling was that it was dangerous to health and safety. That is a curious use of the word "corruption." There are a great number of things that are dangerous to health and safety which don't have any moral stigma attached to them at all.

I don't want particularly to press the alcoholic consumption argument on the basis of morality. It may or may not be moral but the job of the provincial government is not primarily to instruct people in morality, but rather to attempt to establish circumstances which promote health and safety. That is certainly true. I want to point out what is obvious to us all. It is a primary function of a provincial government to promote the health of its citizens. It is a primary function of a provincial government to promote the safety of its citizens on the highway or wherever they may be at risk, but not a primary function — maybe a secondary function but certainly not a primary function — of a provincial government to offer views to its populace on what is moral or immoral entertainment. There are other institutions in society which do that. There are other laws (primarily those of the federal government dealing with obscenity) which regulate that. We do some of it with respect to theatres, and I concede that out of hand, so we are not totally out of the picture. But it is not thought, generally, to be a primary function of government to instruct its citizens in morality in that sense of the word. We hope our operations do not detract from that. There are many views on what is moral and they don't call for judgment by a provincial government in a definitive sense.

With respect to whether or not Teletheatre offers things which are aesthetically upsetting to hon. members, I can only say, and repeat what others have repeated in the House, that the programming is selected by the operator and not by the Government of Saskatchewan or any representative thereof, and that the audience is a very small one — people who select this service. It's not in any sense a service offered in all homes, or most homes. It is clearly a discretionary service which is confined to a very small number of people in relative terms compared with all television watchers. By definition, I believe, you cannot get Teletheatre unless you are a cable subscriber. The member for Thunder Creek was pointing out that the cable subscribers (as a group) are a very small number of the citizens of Saskatchewan.

I think it is also possible for me to get a little lock-on device so that one can prevent any particular channel from being used. If one doesn't like channel whatever the number is, the Teletheatre channel, to be available to one's children, one gets a relatively simple and inexpensive lock-on device. I speak not from any particular personal knowledge, as I have already pointed out.

For all of those reasons it's not a service which is available to many people and is able to be readily restricted from making it available to the general public and particularly to the young people. To suggest that it represents a hypocritical view, to have these available is a view which I simply don't share. I'm not defending the aesthetics of those particular presentations. I'm just suggesting that they don't fall in any sense in the same category as general presentations on regular radio, regular television and cable television, which, in our judgment, are likely to lead to circumstances which have a potential danger to health and safety.

**MR. THATCHER:** — Mr. Premier, I am going to leave this area after this comment. I shall repeat again the term “sanctimonious hypocrisy,” because if you weren't being totally hypocritical about it you would cut off Estevan and Weyburn. They are going to go untouched. Apparently, if we follow your line of thinking, the people in Estevan and Weyburn are certainly of much stronger character than their counterparts in the rest of the province. In your government's infinite wisdom, you are not going to bother them. And the people who live along the Alberta border, who receive the Alberta signal obviously must be of stronger character because they are not going to be bothered.

If you are serious in what you outlined in your belief about removing advertising and what it can potentially do, you would tell *Maclean's* magazine, “Don't send your magazine into this province with your beer and liquor advertising.” They advertise hard stuff. You would tell *Time* magazine, “Don't send your magazine in here, send a blank page, but I don't want it in with that liquor advertising.” The Toronto *Globe and Mail* is widely read in Saskatchewan. I don't know what its circulation is, but it's very high. It has liquor advertising in it. Most of the out-of-province papers do have liquor advertising as do all of the Canadian magazines.

Do you know what you're really doing, Mr. Premier? I say, categorically, that the numbers in your publications and annual reports clearly show that, since the advent of cable, consumption has not gone up. You say that there's no comparison. There is. We've had cable for two years. We have a couple of reports in front of us which say that it has not affected consumption.

You know, you can't make Saskatchewan into a little island in the middle of a great big sea. Unless you're going to literally close our borders to the east, the west and the

south, we are going to continue to receive bits and pieces of corruption from other places. You cannot stop it.

You know what you're doing? You're crippling the owner of that little newspaper — that little weekly paper out in the country — because he can't get liquor advertising. You're hurting him because there's a good ready source of advertising. (I realize that I'm moving into a different issue so I'm not going to spend a great deal of time on this.) His competitors — the people who compete with him from afar — have the benefit of that advertising. You're depriving him. You can argue, "Okay, we're fixing that up. We've spent money on the Aware program." I think it's fair to say that Aware hasn't really stopped too many people from drinking. The intention of Aware was primarily to replace lost revenue or revenue that the Saskatchewan media doesn't get from alcohol advertising. Instead, you have a budget for Aware to replace it. But, as far as decreasing consumption, I don't think the Minister of Health is going to jump up and defend it and say, "Oh heavens, no, it has decreased consumption."

Incidentally, while we're talking about the Minister of Health, he's a great second baseman. I recommend him for a senior cabinet portfolio there. He's also the best hitter. I think when the free agent market comes up, he's going to be in heavy demand.

Anyway, Mr. Premier, I suggest to you that you cannot make an island. Our people are going to see this advertising even if it is dangerous to their health and safety. They're going to see it somehow. I think, in many respects, you're hurting our local media by depriving them of revenue which their counterparts in other parts of Canada take for granted. Your Aware program has hardly replaced that revenue. Perhaps all you're doing is accelerating the decline of many of our own Saskatchewan-controlled media into oblivion; I refer particularly to the weeklies. Let's face it, they don't have an abundance of advertising revenue. Sure, they get a fair amount of government advertising. They're pretty heavily dependent on that. You are removing a real source of revenue from them.

I repeat that two years of cable experience and your own figures dispute your assertion that consumption goes up with advertising. I again refer you to your own report. With that, I intend to leave the area.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I'll make a very quick reply. The member makes a point with respect to the printed medium. He knows that we can't tell *Maclean's* not to send its magazines here. We have no power to do that. Even if it were wise to do so, we couldn't do it. We don't run the post office. Perhaps we should, but we don't. We obviously can't in any way, stop (nor should we be able to) the dissemination of printed material in the province. We wouldn't wish that.

The member is right in saying that it is a difficult problem for the weekly newspapers, and that's certainly one of the aspects of it which is regrettable. We do offer Aware and Feeling Good advertising and the like, but we are not suggesting that it necessarily replaces other advertising. We just attempt to deal with it as fairly as we can.

With respect to making Saskatchewan an island, I don't know whether we can create an island, as the hon. member says. I note with respect to the age of consumption of alcoholic beverages though it's not particularly relevant; we moved from 18 to 19, and we were then an island. I note that Manitoba is moving theirs up to 19 and the island gets bigger. Who knows, with respect to liquor advertising, the island may increase in size. I'm not in any way suggesting these are comparable, but we started

with an island with respect to hospitalization and it got bigger. We started with an island with respect to medicare and it got bigger. We started with an island with The Automobile Accident Insurance Act, and it's somewhat bigger. Who knows, our particular views on how society ought to be regulated or not regulated (as the case may be) may find favor elsewhere. Although I must say that that particular aspect of it is not gaining recruits rapidly. But we still think it's a good policy based upon health and safety.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Premier, I don't know if I want to continue the discussion of island building or maybe look at removing some of the mountains. There are a few concerns that I have and I'd like to discuss them with you. Some of these I've attempted to discuss with your ministers but have not found satisfactory answers; therefore, I feel it would only be fit to speak to you, as head of the Government of Saskatchewan, regarding these.

One of the things that certainly comes to mind is the problem of elective surgery. Mr. Premier, I think you well know, and I've heard cases raised in this legislature, of people — and I could take you out and show you people, as I'm sure any member in this House could — who need hip operations. That's one of the things that's classified as elective surgery. These people are having to wait six months approximately for a hospital bed. Many of these people are older people. They are being restricted in part of the good life just because they are in dire pain trying to move around. I wonder if there is any way that we could improve the situation that there is in this great backlog (which I'm sure the Minister of Health would admit there is) of people in Saskatchewan who are waiting for elective surgery. Is there anything that you would plan to do, as the Premier of this province, to improve this very critical situation?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, this is by no means a new problem. This stems really from the desire of a great number of people to get particular kinds of surgery which can only be delivered in base hospitals. In some cases I am advised it's not effectively a limitation on the number of hospital beds, but rather the number of surgical cases which an individual doctor can take. I think it would be reasonable for me to suggest to patients, if they are lined up for surgery (and orthopedics is the big area; this is the one where we hear it all the time), that they ask the surgeon or whoever is referring them to the surgeon, how many patients are in front of him. Because if that particular surgeon has 50 operations lined up in front of that patient then it doesn't much matter how many beds there are, there is going to be a long wait. There have been cases of that, that at least have been suggested to me, where individual surgeons have had large case loads, probably because the number of orthopedic surgeons who specialize in hip replacements is relatively small. I don't know whether in hospitals in Saskatoon and possibly in Regina the beds can be rearranged so that beds which might be available for other types of surgery are made available for orthopedic surgery. I must say that this is an area which is not within my particular sphere of expertise.

It is partly a function of the number of beds, because I suppose if you had another 1,000 beds there might be more beds for orthopedic patients. Since it arises primarily with respect to one or two specialities, I cannot help but feel that it is not only the number of hospital beds but also the way the beds are distributed and the way the surgical procedures are arranged. I don't know the answer to that, but I don't think it is in any way wholly within the power of the government to solve it.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Premier, judging from your remarks and from my investigation into this, I think part of the problem is that some of the beds are closed down during parts of

the year, mainly because of budgetary restraints on hospitals. If you check at the University Hospital you will find some of the operating rooms are not functioning.

I would think that a government which pats itself on the back in providing top-notch hospital care must shoulder some of the responsibility and look at this situation. You say that it could be the specialist. If that is the case, maybe you need more specialists in this situation. People are having to wait six weeks or six or eight months to have a hip replaced, and that's only one example. There are many other things classified as elective surgery. If there is a problem in the delivery of health services in this province it is in dealing with this whole topic of elective surgery. I think you, as Premier, should take a look at this or instruct your Minister of Health to take a look at this situation of beds and operating rooms that are closed down during the summer months. If you don't have enough specialists, if 100 or 200 patients are lined up, that would tell me if we are really delivering to the people or that we should attract other specialists. I wonder why they are not coming here?

I think, Mr. Premier, to dodge the question by saying that it could be that we need more specialists, or that we may need 1,000 more beds . . . I don't think we need more beds. I think we need to utilize the facilities that we have here in Saskatchewan on a year-round basis. There is the crux of the problem.

I would like to move to another area in the field of health. When I spoke on the budget, I congratulated you on the Alvin Buckwold Centre in Saskatoon as being a very valuable centre for diagnosing the capabilities of people considered to be mentally retarded. I believe there needs to be an expansion in this. Since my speech, I have found out that maybe things weren't quite as rosy as I had thought. The Minister of Health will remember about two or three years ago, I questioned him for an increase of \$50,000 in the budget for the Alvin Buckwold Centre, which he complied with. It was gratefully received. However, more recently, I know of a situation where a parent wanted a total assessment on a retarded child. They applied to the Alvin Buckwold Centre . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but I think we are getting into a situation similar to yesterday, that we had with the member for Arm River, and members will recall that at that time the Premier had raised a point of order, and I ruled that the Premier and all ministers should be expected to answer questions for which they have direct responsibility. I referred members to a ruling of the committee Chairman on March 20, 1978, which I will just read again.

During consideration of the main estimate of the Department of Telephones, a point of order was raised, that questions regarding cable television should not be asked under the vote of the Department of Telephones. The chairman ruled that questions on this topic should more properly be asked under the subvote of the communications secretariat, (etc.).

These questions, I think, could be more properly asked of the Minister of Health, so I would ask the member to try to come back into order, and to deal with the estimates of the Executive Council and those things for which the Premier more or less has direct responsibility.

If they are general kinds of questions, I think the Premier has always tried to answer them in the past. But, for detailed questions, I think it is only reasonable to expect that officials would have to be here to answer them.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — In all fairness, Mr. Chairman, I wasn't leading up to a question. I was laying out a scenario — a situation which I was intending to relate to another situation. You assumed that I was going to ask a detailed question, which I don't think is fair on your part.

Secondly, the Premier is the head of the Government of Saskatchewan, and if you tell me in this House that I can't ask him general questions, then I wonder what the purpose of this whole exercise is. Now, I'm not going to grill him on specifics of what is happening in hospital A or hospital B, but . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order, order! Let's not argue with the Chairman over the ruling. I have made my ruling. Let's go back to the questions.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I will go back into this, but I would ask you not to guess at what I'm going to do. If I'm out of line in asking a specific question, fine, I'll accept your ruling. But until that time, let's just keep on. Is that fine?

I think the Premier is willing to answer the question. Mr. Premier, I was on the Alvin Buckwold Centre and I was laying out a scenario here, saying that I knew of a case in which people had applied for a total assessment, waited two weeks for an answer, and were told that they couldn't get an assessment until the middle of July. In checking I was told that there is such a backlog in that situation . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You make fun of it, in the International Year of the Child — that's just about your stage of action, my friend, the member for Yorkton. I phoned the Alvin Buckwold Centre (which I certainly admire) and was told the backlog is such that they need another doctor.

These are some of the scenarios that I want to draw to your attention. But getting back to the situation of the elective surgery, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Premier, what concerns me is that these people (and I say many of them are senior citizens) have to wait for six or eight months in this province to have elective surgery done (if it be a hip operation) when on the other hand in this province one can go into a hospital on very short notice and have an abortion. How do you square that with serving the medical needs of the people of Saskatchewan?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — All I can say is that if the hon. member knows that orthopedic operations are readily available, or more rapidly available in other provinces, he should tell us this. It is not known to me. I don't think it has anything to do with the availability of hospital space. There is nothing mysterious about it. Orthopedic surgeons are in short supply everywhere. The hip operation, which was very rare 10 to 15 years ago, has become a very common operation. The number of people who can perform that operation is relatively low, because there was simply not the same need for orthopedic surgeons when some of the operations which are common today were very uncommon, even as recently as 10 years ago.

I am not unfamiliar with this. My mother has had not one, not two, but three hip replacements. I remember which one was done in Florida, which was done in Chicago, which was done in Toronto and the sequence and frequency or lack of frequency. I think that it's not fair or just to lay those waiting lists at the door of the hospitals. It may well be that we should be able to get more orthopedic surgeons, but they are short everywhere. I think the waiting lists are no longer in Saskatchewan than they are elsewhere. This would indicate that if we are failing in attracting orthopedic surgeons, so are a lot of other people.



I wish I could offer a quick solution to that problem but I don't have one. I think there are many other procedures — appendectomies, herniotomies and abortions — that many surgeons can perform and therefore there's no particular waiting period. However, when you get something which involves a relatively scarce speciality — orthopedics is one, certain types of cancer surgery are another — you tend to have waiting periods. I wish it were not true, but I can offer no quick solution to that. I do not feel that it has much to do with beds closing down in the summer, because I think the hon. member will find that with beds closing down in the summer or not closing down in the summer, there are no particular long waiting lists for the appendectomies or the herniotomies, but there are waiting lists for the orthopedic operations. That tells me that it has nothing much to do with hospital beds, not even anything to do with surgical beds and not much to do with the availability of operating rooms, but concerns the availability of skilled surgeons.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Premier, I would like to discuss with you the concern of the abortions that are performed in this province and funded by public funds — the MCIC (medical care insurance commission). I think the Minister of Health pointed out there were 1,608 of them in the last year under review. There were 8,008 D and Cs — of course, not all are abortions, but some may be performed in the province of Saskatchewan.

I would just like to read a portion of a comment regarding abortion and see what the position of the government opposite is. This comes from a man much more versed on the situation than I am, a Dr. Edward Palmer of New Jersey. He points out this:

The crunch issue in the matter of abortion is this, is the unborn child the image of God or not? Is he a human with an eternal destiny or is he a mere glob, a bit of tissue? Is he an individual distinct from his mother or is he a part of the mother like an appendix, a kidney or a tumor? Is he a human being with a potential or is he a potential human being?

What is the view of the government opposite in regard to a statement on the crunch of the abortion? Do you see the fetus as an extension of the mother or as an unborn human with a human potential?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, that is a theological question and is not one on which the Government of Saskatchewan is called upon to have a view. The Government of Saskatchewan does not have a view on a great number of theological questions, including that one. It may be also a physiological question, but whatever it is, we are here to administer laws and not to give opinions on theological, philosophical questions. I may have personal views, but speaking for our government, we do not have a view on that theological question.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — At some time I would like to discuss with you in private your own personal view. I know here in the estimates I can't press you on what your personal view is, but I will tell you what mine is, very plainly. It goes on to say here:

Each stage of development from fertilization to old age is merely maturing of what is entirely there at the start. Birth only changes a baby's dining habits,

its airways and its charms.

I think that viewpoint is held by many people in this province. Look at what is going on in the courts of the United States today, where they are looking at repealing some of the laws that affect abortion. I wonder if the government opposite would take a stand and be willing to take a stand on this very serious moral problem. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is growing in the United States, as you well know, and it will grow in Saskatchewan. Perhaps you may be lucky not to be in government when that decision has to be made. If the government opposite continues in power, mark my words, you will not be able to stand up in the legislature of this province and say that it is a theological or a philosophical question upon which the government has no opinion.

So I would ask you, Mr. Premier, is there any intention of the government to follow the lead of many of the states in the United States, which are showing some backbone, some morality, some concern about the sanctity of human life and are coming to grips with a most difficult problem? Does the government opposite have that kind of moral courage? Do you have that kind of concern for individuals? Or are you going to continue to waffle on the issue, as you have this afternoon, by passing it off as a theological and philosophical question upon which we have no position? Is this what the people of Saskatchewan can continue to expect from an NDP government if you should have the good graces to stay in power?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, the position of our government is the position of every provincial government in Canada. The proper position of every provincial government in Canada is that the Criminal Code defines what is an abortion and when an abortion is legal and when it is illegal. It very properly, I believe, provides that the judgment will be made by three physicians on a hospital committee.

In so far as I am aware, no abortions have been performed in Saskatchewan hospitals which have not been in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Code passed by our parliament, for good or ill, and approved in each case by three physicians giving their best professional judgment. Whether or not their judgments are right or whether or not the law is right are clearly highly debatable questions.

Whether or not the Government of Saskatchewan should respect the Criminal Code of Canada is not a debatable question. Whether the Government of Saskatchewan should attempt to substitute its judgment for the judgment of three physicians on a particular patient is not debatable. In neither case should the Government of Saskatchewan attempt to substitute its view — in the one case for the Criminal Code, in the other case for the three physicians who make their professional judgment.

The hon. member opposite really is launching an attack on expressing his objection to the provisions of the Criminal Code. He is, in every sense, free to express his objections to the provisions of the Criminal Code, but I do not think that he can call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to act as if the Criminal Code made something illegal which it very clearly makes legal.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Mr. Premier, you may interpret it that I am questioning the Criminal Code. I'm attempting to express the views of a lot of people in this province to the man who is the head of the government of this province. He is a man who perhaps is in a position to use his influence (and I might say an influence which I think is considerable

in the Dominion of Canada) to bring about what I think would be an improvement in our lifestyle, and to do a moral act. It is being done in other countries and sometime in the future, someone is going to have to come to grips with this.

I would just like to read one more quote and then I would leave this topic. This is to show you that many good people are attempting to define the whole question of life and are willing to take a stand. There was a conference on abortion held in Washington, D.C., and I quote from it in my concluding remarks. This was a conference made up of a cross section of leading scientists and concerned individuals, representing every race, religion, culture, and geographic background in America. I quote:

The majority of our group could find no point in time between the union of sperm and egg or, at least, the blastocyst stage and the birth of the infant, at which point we could say that this was not a human life. The blastocyst stage occurs approximately one week after fertilization and would account for twinning. The changes occurring between implantation, the six-week embryo, the six-month fetus, a one-week-old child or a mature child are merely stages of development and maturation.

I believe, Mr. Premier, that many people in Canada, in the world and in the province of Saskatchewan, whole-heartedly believe that and are waiting and wanting legislators to come to grips with this issue. At this point, I will move from the topic, but I hope you have taken my word seriously, because I think it is certainly a serious concern with many people in this province.

I would like to turn to the comments of your right-hand man, the Attorney General, about the position of God in the constitution. The other day in question period (I don't know whether you were present or not) my colleague for Qu'Appelle or my colleague for Kindersley questioned the Attorney General about a statement of his in a law magazine. I am sure you are familiar with the magazine. The Attorney General was quoted as saying that it was a difficult problem to deal with God in the constitution.

When questioned in this House, I think his reasoning (I should use the words of the Minister of Labor, his convoluted reasoning) was that although morally he rather supported it, legalistically it was very difficult. Mr. Premier, my question to you is where in the name of God are we going in this society, if the lawyers are so bungling up things that it makes it difficult in a Christian land to adhere to the God of the Christian people within the constitution?

You're a lawyer yourself. I was shocked when I heard the Attorney General come out with that kind of reasoning. To say that because legalistically (some type of lawyer talk from the Attorney General) it would be easier for the lawyers to legally handle the constitution, "Let's take God out of it." Mr. Premier, can you explain that kind of reasoning to me? Because it escapes me entirely.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — The difficulty, Mr. Chairman, is in the assumption the hon. member makes that this is a Christian land. This is an assumption I am prepared to make, if you are taking about the professed religion of the majority of people. If you are asking me to make that assumption after this bill of rights is in place, which provides for freedom of religion, freedom for Islamic people, for atheists, or anyone else . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I guess there's no point in making the argument. But I am saying we have opposed the bill of rights. We have opposed it because it has these sweeping generalizations for which nobody knows the meaning. One of them is

freedom of religion.

Obviously, I am in favor of freedom of religion. I am a little disturbed at the proposition which can flow from that — that freedom means the state cannot give preference to any one religion. Lots of people say that is what is meant by freedom of religion, therefore it's not up to the state to say that Sunday ought to be a special day. You can't believe that if you believe in freedom of religion. This is how argument goes. I don't know whether that is a good argument. We've seen the same argument operate in the United States that you can't have prayers in schools if you believe in freedom of religion. You tell the Supreme Court of the United States that is nonsense then. They have decided that freedom of religion means the state cannot prefer one religion to another and they can't prefer atheism to another.

The problem is what are we doing if we put in the bill of rights something about God, something about freedom of religion (which presumably means freedom not to have a religion). What are the legal consequences of these conundrums? We believe that the charter of rights ought not to be spelled out in stone. I have no objection to a charter of rights — just not to have it in the constitution so when you run into one of these unusual interpretations (like no prayer in schools) that it cannot be changed. I think that the point the lawyers were making is that it is a little strange and we're not quite sure what we're ending up to if we put a reference to God in the preamble, then refer to freedom of religion down below in the operative portion.

If the statute is meant to be enforced as a piece of law, then it causes trouble for the legal mind. If it's meant to be a statement of our aims and aspirations as a nation, then I am sure neither I, nor the Attorney General, not anyone else, is objecting to the inclusion of a statement about God. We are perhaps not very good practising but at least we are professing Christians. I was brought up with the right Baptist Sunday school upbringing. I have no trouble in having that in a statement. I am just trying to say what I believe the Attorney General was trying to say, that there are certain legal problems which leave unanswered questions which always bother lawyers. I don't think it goes any farther than that, from the point of view of raising a question about it.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I'm certainly wise enough not to get into waters I can't swim in, Mr. Premier. I'm certainly not going to debate the constitutional arguments with you. I just want to point out to you what the university of common sense thinks is that part of a constitution of a country, the preamble of the constitution of any country, could certainly indicate the direction in which the majority of the people of that country is headed. I think it is just astounding and I will say dangerous, if we in Canada at this point in time feel that freedom of religion must indicate that we do not put an adherence to God as a direction to which our country is heading. To me that's wrong. I don't know the legalistic jargon of it or the problems it may cause, but philosophically, theologically, and morally to me and to many that's wrong. I don't think that is the type of constitution we want to see brought in.

I'd like to now turn to another consideration, Mr. Premier. It has to do with a report commissioned to the Minister of Finance, who was minister of health in 1979. The report was written by one Dr. Terry Russell, entitled, *Saskatchewan Health for Children and Youth*. I just want to quote a bit about this report, Mr. Premier, to bring this to your attention, to get your viewpoint. Dr. Russell says:

An excellent job has been done (he's talking about Saskatchewan) in controlling physical disease. But accidents, suicides, drinking, and drugs

are on a rampage and haven't been addressed very well, and the age at which people are at risk has become increasingly lower.

The report finding shows Saskatchewan has the worst accidental death rate for children and youth in Canada, and in relation to the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia, in the 15- to 19-year-old age group. The province holds the second worst record for the 1- to 4-year-old age group and for the 10- to 14-year-old age groups. Findings show a threefold to fivefold increase in suicide in the province since 1972. For those aged 15 to 24 it is the second leading cause of death. The 1977 statistics for suicides in Saskatchewan are cause for alarm. The high rates in the 15-to 19-year-old age span equals the traditional higher 20- to 24-year-old age group, and the number of suicides in the 5- to 14-year-old age groups are recent phenomena which are very disturbing, the investigators state.

Mr. Premier, those aren't very glowing statistics to describe what is happening to the youth of our province. That report was brought in on February 25, and announced by the Minister of Health. There are some recommendations by Dr. Terry Russell as to what could be done to try to alleviate this very serious problem. Are you aware of the report, Mr. Premier, and can you tell me if anything has been done to improve this serious societal problem that is afflicting Saskatchewan? We have the worst record in Canada.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Yes, I'm aware, in general terms, of the report. Is anything being done? The answer is yes. To know more of the details of what is being done, I invite you to ask the Minister of Health. I simply am not aware of the details. I know that the child safety committee has been announced. I know that some thrust groups, I believe they are called, have been set up to address some of these problems. I wouldn't trust my memory to deal further on details of what follow-up of Dr. Russell's report there has been.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Well, I certainly will be talking to the Minister of Health because I think this is an alarming situation. I was shocked to see that we were leading this nation in suicides of young people, and that has to be a cancerous growth in our society, and it is certainly something that should be addressed most severely and should be cured. Perhaps later on today I'll be able to discuss the situation with the Minister of Education.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Premier, I'd like to spend a few minutes this afternoon discussing with you the irrigation issue. We've talked about it before. Some progress, I believe, is being made, but there are some things which I'm still concerned about. When I talked to you last year you indicated that I should go out and see if there were at least 50 people who were interested in irrigation on the west side of Lake Diefenbaker. I found 143.

The project has been approved, up to a point. The government, at this point in time, has indicated that it will pay approximately half (or perhaps a few dollars over half) of the capital cost needed to put water in the existing irrigation ditch. My question to you is: do you feel that the government cannot become involved to the extent that it, at least, makes the water in the ditch available to the people in that particular area? Now, I want to go beyond just the Outlook area before we're through, but I want to start with just that one.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, I have to confess to the hon. member that I am

not familiar, in detail, with this. I know that he has asked a good number of questions of the Minister of Agriculture dealing with this at some length. I doubt very much whether I would have anything to add to what the Minister of Agriculture has said on these issues. As I recall, when I spoke last week, I said that we would put the main ditches in order. The farmers would then pick up the water, pump it out and do what they wanted with it. That's my recollection of what I said. My recollection of what the Minister of Agriculture has said is that this would be a satisfactory arrangement. I am not sufficiently familiar with the details of the South Saskatchewan River development project on the west side to be able to answer, in detail, what the appropriate arrangement and cost sharing would be.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Premier, I can tell you what the Minister of Agriculture has said, if that will be of assistance. But what I'm asking for is the policy position of the government as to a commitment to supply the capital costs necessary to put the water in the existing ditch. The farmers are going to have a significant amount of capital costs when they take the water from the ditch and put it on the fields. They have also expressed a willingness to pay the water users fee. I believe the government could then collect, over a period of time, the capital costs back from the farmers. The costs in regard to the awkwardness of setting up the initial pumps and the equipment necessary to pump straight from Lake Diefenbaker into the canal are the costs I'm talking about. The Minister of Agriculture has indicated that the total cost would be about \$750,000. Of that amount, he's asking the farmers to pick up approximately \$365,000. My question to you is: is the Government of Saskatchewan prepared to get involved in irrigation to the extent that it will provide those capital costs to put water in the ditch and charge farmers for the water that they draw from it?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — My answer to that is that the policy of the Government of Saskatchewan on irrigation is that announced by the Minister of Agriculture. Changes in government policy will be announced in due course. I, frankly, don't know whether what you suggest is reasonable or unreasonable.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Premier, we've had three extremely dry years in a row in our province, and we may be facing a fourth one. I believe that irrigation in the province of Saskatchewan could be a very valuable industry and a valuable safeguard, not only to the people who grow grains, but also to the people who raise livestock.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — It's called drought-proofing.

**MR. SWAN:** — I believe indeed that it could be called drought -proofing, as the hon. member said.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Very intelligent, hon. member!

**MR. SWAN:** — There's a limit to how far I'll go. The concern I have is that the government does not seem to have a commitment to proceed to any great extent with an irrigation program in the province. Now, at the time Diefenbaker Lake was built there was an indication in the original contract, signed by T.C. Douglas in 1958 when he was premier of this province, that there were 500,000 acres available for irrigation from that particular project. We're a long way from having 500,000 acres under irrigation in this province.

That was only one project. I think there are a number of other areas in the province which could benefit from irrigation, and the water is available. My question to you is

this: are you prepared, as a government, to take a serious look and to begin to develop irrigation in the areas where the water is available? Are you willing as a government to do that?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — My recollection of the South Saskatchewan River project is that the 500,000 acres figure was a general proposition as to what might be available. There were no commitments on 500,000 acres. The commitment was for 50,000 acres. I'll look at the contracts. I'm speaking now from recollection from a way back but I believe the commitment was for 50,000 acres. There were certainly thoughts that at some point in the future there might be much more extensive irrigation. I'm not sure whether we're at 50,000 acres or not. We certainly have 50,000 acres of irrigated land but I'm not sure whether it's all in that project.

If I may put the view of the government in its broadest form, it is that we wish to proceed with irrigation as rapidly as farmers wish to proceed with a good deal of encouragement from the government. The first 10,000 acres or 20,000 acres, particularly the east side project (and I'm speaking now from memory on the size), came very slowly. The farmers were dry-land farmers who were dubious about getting into irrigation. A good deal of encouragement had to be given. There were grants, there were remissions of water fees and the like.

There has been little evidence up until the last year or two that many farmers were very interested. There were a few who were always interested in growing potatoes, alfalfa or some crops other than grain crops. The alfalfa cubing operation was encouraged and some potato operations were encouraged. There has been a good deal of discussion of other vegetables. I don't know how much is produced there, but I can remember a number of discussions about it.

Work on the west side was certainly done, and suspended when it began to look as if we could hardly get any farmers interested on that side. The ditch is there, but not very much else on the west side, although I am again speaking from memory, and I don't know the area intimately.

We would like to expand the number of irrigated acres and we would like to particularly expand the number of irrigated acres which were in either vegetable root crops or forage root crops — vegetable because it gives rise to another secondary processing industry and forage because it offers a back-up for the livestock industry and for the cattle industry should we have a period of drought. We would also like to get the security which comes from a good number of irrigated acres.

Obviously we would look at sugar beet and other things which are the lifeblood of irrigated acres in southern Alberta. We have to be convinced, I think, that farmers would like to proceed with it. This is not to suggest that they wouldn't get encouragement from the government. But we don't want to strong-arm them because then we are simply left with dissatisfied farmers who have expectations of government assistance which are higher than we can give.

I can't give a more definitive policy statement than that except to say that we would welcome with open arms a substantial increase in the number of irrigated acres.

**MR. SWAN:** — Mr. Premier, you are right on the figure of 50,000 acres being the commitment. That commitment was to be accomplished within three years after the lake was to the irrigation level and we are a long way behind that figure at the end of the

three years. We are some 14 years down the road now.

What I am really speaking about is the capability of the water supply there for 500,000 acres. In a province like Saskatchewan, where drought is no stranger (it frequently comes to this province), 500,000 acres of irrigation could be a real safeguard against drought for a significant area of the province.

Now when you speak of irrigation in the province as a whole, it could go far, far beyond the 500,000 acres. That's just one project that we are talking about there. The requests I get are not just from the people on the west side of Diefenbaker Lake but from a number of other areas in the province, and these requests are for assistance to get into the irrigation area. The capital costs are extensive and I think the Premier will know that the method of irrigation has changed significantly since 1968, when you had to go to a land levelling process and so on. Today they can do it with irrigation equipment which works much differently.

This has changed the attitude of many people in the Outlook area and on the west side of Lake Diefenbaker and the area around Allan in the southern part of the province, where there are other water sources available. People are now asking and wanting to get into an irrigation program that would make their livelihood a little more stable. That's the reason I am asking for a new look by this government at their position as it relates to irrigation.

Your policies were changed slightly this year to bring the total amount of assistance to any one farmer to \$2,850. I think that's an increase of something like \$1,100. It's a help, but it's a small help when you are talking of irrigation at a cost of somewhere between \$79,000 to \$80,000 per quarter section to buy equipment. Then \$2,800 is not a significant amount of money per person.

So I am asking will you as a government sit down and take a new look at this to come up with new dollars to assist people to get into irrigation? If you won't make it available in grants, can you make it available through FarmStart or some other program that could make interest at least bearable for the people who are having to purchase very expensive equipment?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — The hon. member makes a good point. I think attitudes are changing with respect to irrigation. I think it is fair to say that a good number of dry-land farmers were not impressed with irrigation, particularly in the relatively good years of the early '70s. In the Outlook-Broderick area, we still have difficulty getting farmers to irrigate even when there are ditches taking the water right past their farms. There are ditches right in their yard and they still don't feel it's worth their while to irrigate. However, the hon. member makes the point that irrigation methods are changing. The use of gravity as the essential method of distribution is less common and they're using pumps and those big wheels and all these sorts of things. Irrigation farming is not my strong point. I'll concede that out of hand.

We are making loans available through FarmStart and the maximum must be in the order of \$200,000. It may well be that the FarmStart interest rate is not sufficiently attractive although it is well below any commercial interest rate. If the person doesn't have a lot of money, there is a grant program as well with FarmStart. There are some irrigation grants — not a lot of money — \$2,500 to \$3,000 a quarter, I guess it is. There are some FarmStart grants and some FarmStart loans as well below commercial rates.



I won't say more except that the point the hon. member makes is a good one. Our government continues to look at ways to increase the amount of irrigated land for several reasons. One, because we would like to get the best use possible out of a lot of social capital in the Gardiner Dam and the whole project; two, because we would like to grow some crops — root crops and the like — which would be the basis for a processing industry; three, because we would like the security and the backup for the livestock industry and for others that comes from having irrigated land.

**MR. SWAN:** — I might tell the Premier that on the Broderick-Outlook project, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation superintendent tells me that he has never had a busier year since he has been involved with Sask Power and mainly it is because of installing new services to irrigation equipment going into that area. So perhaps your wishes for that area are coming true this year. I believe there are something like 35 new irrigation programs taking place in that one small area this year.

I would like to have you give us some commitment to take this back to cabinet and give it a pretty good hearing. I believe that for some time, the agriculture section of the province has not received the attention that it should from cabinet. I would like you to take the irrigation request back to cabinet to have it discussed with a look at the newer methods to see if something can be done.

I want you also to have a realistic look at what happens under FarmStart. You say there's money available and there is some, but it's available to very young people just starting up; it's not available to those who have been around for a little longer because their assets tend to be too high to qualify. There is still a grave need for them to have large amounts of capital available if they're going into extensive irrigation projects. So my request is that cabinet find some method of funding. I don't think it should all be in grants by any stretch of the imagination. I think farmers are used to paying their own way. But a method of providing funding at better interest rates would likely be all that's necessary to have a significant amount of irrigation take place in the near future.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — With respect to whether or not agricultural subjects get very much time in cabinet, all I can say is you could have fooled me, if you are making the supposition that they don't get much discussion. Without rebutting, may I point out that members such as the member for Buena Vista, a nice city riding like that, owns some farmland and the member for Nutana owns some farmland, and the member for Regina Lakeview seems to recall that he was once deputy minister of agriculture. The member for Weyburn city is a retired farmer, and the member for The Battlefords has land and worked for the Department of Agriculture. It seems to me that everybody who purports to speak for the cities is a frustrated farmer.

I think that the hon. member makes points. He asks really two things. First, would we assess the irrigation program once again to see whether or not we can do things that might speed it up, and secondly, will we look specifically at FarmStart along that line or will we note the limitations of FarmStart as a method of loan capital for irrigation because of the relatively exclusionary provisions of FarmStart? I understand that. We are not going to change FarmStart, but this doesn't mean that we shouldn't perhaps have another program for people who want to move into irrigation, which is a high capital operation. I will give him the undertaking that I will ask the Minister of Agriculture to look at those specifically. I will not give a further undertaking that will produce any results, but the member for Indian Head-Wolseley knows better than to expect results from this government. I'm sure that's what his line would be, but I will

pursue it.

**MR. McLEOD:** — Mr. Premier, I would like to direct some questions to you regarding the frustration that is felt, I think it's fair to say, by the whole community and the eastern half of the constituency I represent, which includes the town of Meadow Lake and the surrounding area. This is with regard to the fact that the Meadow Lake Sawmill is closed. Your government is now the 100 per cent owner of that mill, which was closed by the other company prior to your government purchasing it. The frustration felt there certainly has to do with the downturn in the economy, but I think it stems from the fact that they are unable to get any kind of a commitment as to a date when they would have some information about what the future of that mill will be, let alone when it will reopen.

I think it's more than just a frustration of having lost their jobs and having to look for other ones, but the fact that they don't even know for sure whether their families will have to move elsewhere to find other employment, and so on. The situation at present is that many of these families are remaining in Meadow Lake while the breadwinner, the man who once worked in the mill, is away working. Mr. Premier, I haven't received satisfactory answers for myself, and certainly I haven't received answers satisfactory to the people in the constituency I represent. I have no idea how many, but I know a number of them have written to your office asking for a response from you on this. They are appealing to your social conscience, if nothing else. The frustration they feel is also because they receive answers from your deputy minister, who is here with you today.

In one case a letter from a lady was referred to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan for some reason which nobody can determine. Another case is that of a representative of the union involved, who sent a letter to you asking for an announcement and for some information regarding the future of that mill. It was referred to the minister in charge of Sask Forest Products. There again, no one can really understand why it should be referred to him since his jurisdiction doesn't involve that mill. I would ask the Premier for some answer that would hopefully give some satisfaction to the people in that area.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, I wish I could give satisfaction to the hon. member. I simply cannot give him a commitment. The Meadow Lake Sawmill is owned by the Prince Albert Pulp Company (PAPCO). It is now true that all of the shares of the Prince Albert Pulp Company are owned by the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan. The Prince Albert Pulp Company is still being operated essentially by a board, some of whom are the old directors and some of whom will be new directors, and with the same management as was in place when the majority of the shares were owned by Parsons and Whittemore. We are still taking the same management decisions and management advice. We have not made any decisions to operate this as a Crown corporation, if I may put it that way. We are continuing to operate it as a commercial entity in exactly the same way or substantially the same as it was before, because we are negotiating with at least one and perhaps more potential purchasers of the shares of PAPCO.

We are simply not in a position to give a commitment that we are going to open the mill. I wish I could. I wish I could say that we are going to open the mill because it is commercially sound or that we are going to open the mill even though it isn't commercially sound. I wish I could say, "Well, we'll sell it to Saskatchewan Forest Products." They operate mills marginally and they do it with their eyes open. But I

simply cannot give you that assurance. Our current thinking is that we would try to sell a portion of the shares of PAPCO to a partner and that we would keep PAPCO intact and not sell off any of the assets of PAPCO before the sale.

That is all I can say to the hon. member since we have not made the decision, which he in essence asked us to make, of operating the mill because of the desirable social impacts that it would have on his community. He is not arguing that it is commercially sound to operate it; we're not convinced that it is. We take his point that it would have a desirable impact on the community. We are not now in a position to say that we can act because of that reason.

**MR. McLEOD:** — I understand what you are saying, Mr. Premier. When you say that it's under the management of a board which is in place, it seems to be the management decisions you say were in place before your purchase of it, which is something that I wasn't able to find out from any of your ministers. I thank you, the people will at least know that much about it.

There is one other point I would like to make about this. I said before that I am not convinced it is economically unsound, but I won't get into that debate. There are two reasons the mills should open, regardless of what your management people are saying, even if it's on the short term: (1) these people should be put back to work while these supposed negotiations are going on with CanFor (we're led to believe); and (2) the prime timber that is now in place from the mill site and in the bush should be used. I have brought this detail up before in the House with several of your ministers.

For those two reasons I ask the Premier to exert some influence there, at least to open those mills. While it is under review the people could be working. For social reasons, it would certainly do something for the optimism that is gone from Meadow Lake. The lack of optimism is very evident there now.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I understand the point the hon. member is making. The advice we have received is that the wood that has been cut in the mill or in the bush is not in imminent danger of deteriorating badly. That advice may be wrong, but that is what we received. On that score we have more time. On the other score, I take the point he makes but I am unable to give him a commitment.

**MR. LANE:** — Mr. Premier, today in Crown corporations your minister responsible for SGI admitted that the government had been studying SGI's getting into the life insurance business. He then immediately added that it's not in the year under review and that he doesn't have to answer any more questions. I believe this was very close to the exact phrase. He made what I believe to be a flip comment — that we would be looking at the next four or five years.

A decision of this magnitude, obviously, has to have a great degree of consultation. If the matter is being studied, I am assuming when it's not in the years under review, that the study is ongoing although I'm not aware of that — it could have been prior to the year under review. I wonder if the Premier might comment on the government studies or the government's consideration of SGI's going into life insurance?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I do not know that the matter is being studied. I do advise the hon. member that a great number of things are studied around the government long before they come for consideration by cabinet or the cabinet minister. There is really no

point in raising issues unless some preliminary work has been done on them. So I don't know whether there have been any studies. I am aware of none with respect to SGI's going into the life insurance business — none at all.

**MR. LANE:** — I have taken your minister's statements. I wonder if the Premier would comment on the idea of SGI's going into life insurance, in terms of the fact that we have presently at least, two well-known Saskatchewan-based life insurance companies. SGI would obviously be in competition with these organizations.

There is a very extensive industry in the province of Saskatchewan to date. Obviously, for SGI to be successful, it would have to be in a monopoly position, based on its track record to date.

I wonder, Mr. Premier, if you would give the assurance that the Government of Saskatchewan is not then going to get into the life insurance business.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, the government insurance office is not in the life insurance business. I am aware of no studies that it go into the life insurance business. If there is any change in government policy, it will be announced in due course. I do not anticipate a change. My recollection of the reasons why SGI is not in the life insurance business, and wasn't in 1945 (and I don't have the act here) is that it is not empowered to enter the life insurance business. My recollection is that a look at The Saskatchewan Government Insurance Act (and I may be wrong on this) will indicate that it is not empowered to go into the life insurance business.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — It was in a lot of things it wasn't empowered to go into.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, no. There is an exclusion there. The exclusion is quite narrow — life and health. However, we can sort that one out. I am speaking from memory. It has been probably 10 or 15 years since I have ever looked at that act. The reasons were fairly clear — the co-ops were in the life insurance business, and we were not particularly interested in getting into the life insurance business. In any case, we sell a lot of bonds to life insurance companies and they may not be attracted to the idea of us being in the life insurance business. So, those reasons, which have existed for a great length of time, probably still exist. All I can say is that we're not now in the life insurance business, and if there is any change in policy, it will be announced in due course.

**MR. ANDREW:** — I have a question, Mr. Premier, with regard to the present problem of the oil industry in the province of Saskatchewan. The Government of Saskatchewan has, by and large, taken a hands-off position as of now — tacit approval, I take it, of the Alberta position.

I will take the Premier back to 1973, and subsequent years from 1973 (1975, I think, as late as 1979). The Premier at the premiers' conference in Quebec brought forth the Saskatchewan position of how to proceed in Canada with regard to the energy question. That was about a year and one-half ago I think, Mr. Premier. It was, in effect, to say that any increase in the wellhead price, over and above what it was in 1979, should go to a federal energy security fund controlled, by and large, by the federal government. The members on this side of the House, of course were against that. Could the Premier advise as to whether that position is still being actively considered by your government, or whether you have finally scrapped it as being a poorly conceived plan which will do nothing, really, to solve the particular dilemma of the energy

problem in Canada?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, we put forward that proposal in 1974-75 — the so-called, Canada energy security fund proposal. It had a good number of other aspects in it, including the removal of the non-deductibility provisions of the federal budget of 1974, not only with respect to oil, but also to potash, uranium, and others. It was not a simple proposal. We have put it forward on a number of occasions since. The member is right in believing that the last formulation of it really was put forward at the premiers' conference in Quebec.

It seemed clear, at this point, that, firstly, it had no particular support. Secondly, the circumstances on which it was based were changing to the extent that the program could no longer proceed in the way that we had earlier outlined. It was no longer reasonable or possible to talk about the removal of the non-deductibility because the non-deductibility had been built into the tax structure too fully to be easily removed. We were simply not going to get anyone to accept that. The proposal was substantially recast — put in a very different way — at the federal-provincial conference on energy (or perhaps on the economy) in November 1979. The policy of November 1979, together with such elaborations as circumstances might dictate, has been the policy of the government since that time. We'd be happy to provide it for you. We have little booklets which outline the changes in the policy which occur from time to time. That's the one which outlines our policy now.

**MR. ANDREW:** — It seems to me that in the energy debate right now, you're really letting Alberta carry the load. Whatever Alberta and Ottawa come up with, that's okay with you. You had no hesitation in becoming involved in the constitutional question. You gave up your proposal as a failure and fell back into the position of the other provinces. Is that why you are a step and one-half behind everyone else, taking a wait and see attitude instead of just making the odd statement that you aren't actively pursuing this energy question? I think it has ramifications for the province of Saskatchewan every bit as severe, at least in the short term, as the implications of the National Energy Board program.

Why are you not actively pursuing some type of agreement with the federal government on the energy question? Why are you sitting idle as the production falls in Saskatchewan? I know from your paper presented in 1979 that you really don't have much time for multinational or large corporations; you want the bulk of it done in the public sector. Why are you sitting so idly on a question vital not only to western Canada but particularly to Saskatchewan? As our production flattens out and drops, and the activity almost comes to a standstill in many areas, why are you sitting on your hands, Mr. Premier, and not becoming more active on that whole question?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Chairman, I think it would be incorrect to characterize our stand as sitting on our hands and not being active. In fact, the former deputy minister of mineral resources, Mr. Moncur, and Mr. Douglas, the deputy minister of the Department of Finance, have been and are in regular consultation and communication with the appropriate federal opposition members. Mr. Cowley deals regularly with Mr. Lalonde. We have gained the impression that the federal government is not going to make an arrangement with us until it has one with Alberta, unless it could make an arrangement with us which would improve its bargaining position with respect to Alberta. We find that a very difficult position. We have not really been pursuing a settlement because it has not been pursuing a settlement with us.

The facts are that Alberta has more than 85 per cent of the oil production in Canada. The federal government is pursuing a settlement with Alberta. Until there is a settlement with Alberta, I think it is entirely possible that there will not be a settlement with Saskatchewan. We simply do not have the negotiating power to force the federal government to make a satisfactory settlement with us, which would have massive ramifications for them if it were applied to Alberta. We do not wish to make a less favorable settlement with them if we think that Alberta's bargaining power would produce a more favorable settlement. So, the prospects of a settlement negotiated between us and the Government of Canada do not appear promising at this time.

**MR. ANDREW:** — Okay. One further question, Mr. Premier, and it relates to the western power grid. Now you were at the western premiers' conference a week or two weeks ago. My question basically is this. Obviously, the position of the Government of Saskatchewan (to put it very simply) is that, it would seem to me, there are two objectives or possibilities to look at: first, simply allow the lines to transfer the power to the province; or, secondly, allow it to go through the province and buy the power. Now that is fairly simple. Were those matters discussed with the other premiers? Either one of those options? Obviously, the one with regard to buying power was. Was the second option, that is, it would simply allow the power to be transmitted across our province? Was that discussed? Is that presently being considered as an option that the government could take with regard to the western power grid?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — No, it is not being considered. And no, it was not discussed. Perhaps that's too strong. It might have come up as a casual comment, but there were fairly lengthy discussions. I had some, not many hours, but I suppose, an hour or one and a half hours, myself, and I know that Mr. McArthur had further extensive discussions. All were predicated on the grid being built and Sask Power owning the grid portion in Saskatchewan, and taking a substantial block of power, either 500 megawatts, or the pro rata shares of what the dam would produce (which, in a good year, would be something over 500 megawatts, and in a poor year, would be something less) or, some bottom guarantees. All of them were predicated on the purchase of power, either a firm block or a pro rata share of the river run off the grid. Now, that's what was discussed.

**MR. ANDREW:** — So, what you are saying to me is that if Saskatchewan cannot negotiate a purchase from that power grid, it would be game over and the power grid question would be set off indefinitely into the future. Would that be a fair statement? If you can't make an agreement with regard to purchasing power through that grid, the game is out on the western power grid, at least for the time being?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I think that that's probably a proper conclusion, but that isn't one which we have faced yet. Nobody has been assuming that we can't make a deal. The entire assumption has been that the grid would be built and we would buy a substantial block of power in the general range of 400 to 500 megawatts. Nobody has addressed what would happen if we weren't able to arrive at an agreement to buy the power because, I think, we have been operating on the assumption that if that grid crossed the province we would assuredly want to buy power from it. We wouldn't want it to cross if we weren't buying power and if it crossed, we would want to buy power. There is no reason, if we are going to have all the inconvenience and difficulties of having a great high line like that across the province, that we wouldn't want the benefits of having whatever diversification and benefits we can get from another source of power.

**MR. ANDREW:** — Just one more question, Mr. Premier. I just think it is important, in the co-operative spirit of the three prairie provinces, that you pursue that and come to an agreement. I hope you won't stand in the way (be it for political reasons or whatever) of the development of that power grid in the very near future.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Let me say that I share the hon. member's view. Let me make a couple of points. The power off that grid is going to be quite a bit more expensive than we could generate for ourselves.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You know that?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Yes. Therefore, we will have higher power rates for a number of years if we go that route. If calculations are right then 10, 12 years later power will be cheaper and for quite a while.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That's what we tried to show you.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — That's right. The question of where the crossover point is, is arguable. You have to predict the cost of interest rates and all the rest. I won't go into the pros and cons of it. I am just saying that there are some serious downsides on a western power grid, as well as upside benefits.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — One more question, then we can go through the subvotes on both executive council and legislation quite rapidly. I received a little brochure in the mail the other day, report from the legislature, with your picture on the back. My question is: is this paid for by the Government of Saskatchewan or by the party which you represent? If it is paid by the Government of Saskatchewan, would you indicate how many of these were sent out, at what cost and where they were sent?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I don't know whether I've seen that pamphlet. Does it have my picture on it? Oh yes.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Obviously an old picture!

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, the answer is no, it wasn't paid for by the Government of Saskatchewan. It was paid for by the MLAs or the party. It wasn't paid for by the government. I can assure you of that.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Why would they put your picture on it?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — Because, our party, however misguided, believes their leader is a political asset.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 to 7 inclusive agreed.

Vote 10 agreed.

**CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOW (SUPPLEMENTARY)**

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 10**

Items 1 to 4 inclusive agreed.

Vote 10 agreed.

**CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOW**

**LEGISLATION**

**Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 21**

**Item 1**

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I notice a substantial increase in the expenditures of about \$400,000. But there is no indication in the estimates book of the number of people-years, or whatever it is. Are you increasing the staff? What would be the reason for that rather dramatic increase in expenditure?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I just happen to have that at hand. The number of staff has increased somewhat. They are not shown in the blue book to make the point — and a rather important little point — that they are not members of the public service but rather employees of the Assembly. It's a point which we are trying to make. I don't think we need to explain that.

The number of person-years, or the number of permanent staff, has gone up by one — from six to seven. The number of part-time staff has gone up somewhat. *Hansard* is the big one. There are six extra people in *Hansard*. Not many more than that — but six person-years.

That comes about because we're doing the committees, particularly the Crown corporations committee, which wasn't done at all before.

**MR. ANDREW:** — I have one question, Mr. Premier. The committee on rules recommended, and the report was adopted in this House, a committee on internal economy. One thing it does is get rid of the situation where the Clerk, who has a very important function of independence (which we all acknowledge), does not sit and defend his estimates with the Premier. Can the Premier advise as to whether or not legislation will be in this session so that we get rid of that problem, so that next year we will be dealing with that on a committee of internal economy basis? Or will we be back and still dealing with the Premier?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I think I can say that legislation will be available on Monday. There are a number of items and if we have to jettison some because we can't put it together, the board of internal economy will not be jettisoned. Our intention is to have that in this session. We have adopted that and we may as well put it into effect now. That is our intention.

**MR. ANDREW:** — Another question, Mr. Premier. Has the television equipment now



been ordered? Are we in the process of that? What is the likely date as to the time we will have television in this Chamber?

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I'm not sure whether the television equipment has been ordered. It's clearly been priced. I am advised that the matter has been studied. It has been approved by cabinet. It is back with the consultant who is designing the equipment. The equipment is in the course of being designed. It has not been ordered. It is anticipated that it will be designed, ordered, installed, and ready to operate approximately one year from now.

**MR. ANDREW:** — That would be at the end of the next session. There will not be television at the next session.

**HON. MR. BLAKENEY:** — I do not think there will be television at the next session . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, I don't know about that.

Item 1 agreed.

Items 2 to 13 inclusive agreed.

Vote 21 agreed.

## **CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOW (SUPPLEMENTARY)**

### **LEGISLATION**

#### **Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 21**

Items 1 to 7 inclusive agreed.

Vote 21 agreed.

The Assembly adjourned until 7 p.m.